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ABSTRACT

Factors at the national, state, and institutional level that damage constructive relationships from the two-year college perspective are considered. Two-year institutions have felt that they have not received their proportionate share of attention or funds from the federal level, and that federal vocational education legislation has not protected them from arbitrary and capricious decisions by state directors of vocational education in funding priorities. Other issues at the federal level relate to staffing with the U.S. Office of Education (USOE) of a two-year college advocate and fair representation on various panels organized by the USOE. Additionally, two-year colleges have been concerned about the taxonomies for information reports that did not accommodate the comprehensive programs of community colleges, particularly in the occupational areas at the certificate or nondegree level. At the state level, two-year colleges are concerned about the hierarchical attitude that exists toward the various segments of higher education with the universities at the top of the pyramid and the two-year colleges at the base. Additionally, the relatively minor attention given to the two-year colleges in state master plans for postsecondary education is a cause of concern, as is the channeling of vocational/technical funds toward secondary programs. Issues at the institutional level that represent forces damaging to constructive relationships include articulation whereby two-year graduates are not given appropriate recognition or credit upon transfer. Additionally, the strategies used by four-year state colleges to increase enrollments through community service and continuing education programs and through occupational programs are pertinent issues. The institutional level concerns may be resolved if coordinating and governing boards provide leadership. (SW)

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FORCES WHICH DAMAGE CONSTRUCTIVE RELATIONSHIPS
FROM THE TWO-YEAR COLLEGE SYSTEM PERSPECTIVE

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"Forces Which Damage Constructive Relationships
From The Two-Year College System Perspective"

by Louis W. Bender
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Thank you, Warren, for that introduction. If it were not that all of you here know Warren Hill well, I would feel obligated to "let the air" out of that inflated introduction he gave me!

I have thoroughly enjoyed being here since yesterday listening to the presentations and discussion. Some of the discussion may be suffering from a tendency to blurr our terms, leading to confusion on some of the issues being addressed by the conference. Let me illustrate by identifying three areas of confusion I would hope we could avoid today. First, as board members and officials charged with the higher education system of the state, we naturally tend to conceptualize the institution as an organization and thus are concerned with its survival as an organization. In our discussion, however, we frequently are talking about "mission" or purpose of various types of institutions required to serve the needs of the state. We talk about the survival of higher education when we actually mean institutional survival. We are rightfully concerned with survival of various institutions as organizations; however, as has been stated at several of these IEP conferences, the legislature and the general public thinks in terms of survival or benefit of a specific organization. We should,

therefore, clearly delineate when we are specifically speaking of institution survival and separate it from the broad generalizations which we have used from time to time.

A second area of confusion has been to use the term "federal government" interchangeably to mean national policy through the action of the Congress as opposed to the bureaucracy charged with administering and monitoring the various federal programs. If we are talking about changes which accrue because of guidelines developed by officials in the Office of Education, then we should be clear that it is the action of officials within the bureaucracy and not national policy which creates some of the problems we have been discussing.

The third confusion stems from our tendency to stereotype. There has been some discussion of abuses reported for several community colleges in distorting enrollment reporting of non-credit community service courses for use in formula reimbursements. As a result, all community colleges tend to be identified as culprits in such practices. Neither is that true nor is it a fact that only a given community college has been responsible for "enrollment padding" for the Chronicle for Higher Education has reported enrollment scandals at university and graduate school levels as well. It is essential, in my judgment, that each sector of postsecondary education feel that it is recognized as a legitimate and worthy subsystem within all of postsecondary education. We should neither pre-judge the "new kid on the block" nor label the entire family because of the doings of a specific individual.

As I approached preparation of the perspective of the two-year college systems toward the assigned topic, I sought to envision the interests of a very diverse array of institutional forms. Whenever the term two-year institution is used, people generally conceive of the public community college as being synonymous. While this type of institution represents the largest proportion of the more than 1,200 institutions, there are approximately 400 independent two-year junior colleges and a smaller number of two-year branch campuses of baccalaureate institutions which are recognized in federal legislation as well as in state plans throughout the country. Another type institution is the two-year technical institute offering postsecondary education programs, although many states still prohibit these institutions from awarding Associate degrees. Finally, we should realize that there are now several states which have authorized proprietary schools to award degrees. It would be possible to develop a paper which addresses "forces which damage constructive relationships" within the two-year college sector itself. As many of you know from personal experience in your own state, competition for students, competition for funds, and competition for recognition are continuing problem areas between the various types of two-year institutions within that state. Some of you have found these conflicts of such intensity that corrective action has been necessary.

Since the community college is most frequently at the center of legislative and political interaction, I shall identify some of the issues which those institutions would contend are the locus

of detrimental relationships within a state system. I have organized these problem areas from the national or federal level to the state and then local levels for our consideration. Let me also clarify that some of the issues I will identify have been resolved in several cases. It is important, however, to examine the nature of the problem as well as some of the political pressures two-year institutions have been able to bring upon policy-makers or governmental officials.

Federal/National Issues

For the past decade, two-year institutions have not felt they received their proportionate share of attention or funds from the federal level. The higher education programs enacted by the Congress in the 60's were viewed as partisan in favor of the universities and baccalaureate institutions. The frustration of the two-year college systems led to a strong effort by the American Association of Community Junior Colleges, the National Council of State Directors of Two-Year Colleges, and a large group of institutional leaders to win resolution of the perceived inequity from the Congress in the form of a bill sponsored by Senator Harrison H. Williams of New Jersey in 1969 which was titled "The Comprehensive Community College Act of 1969." Interestingly, Williams invited co-sponsors to that bill and had fifty-two senators who requested their name be added. While that legislation passed with few dissenting votes in the Senate, it died in the House. The two-year college advocates felt separate and distinct federal legislation was the best way to bring resolution to their grievance.

They wanted a law which was specifically addressed to the community college which would guarantee moneys from the other federal programs. The contents of the Williams bill became Title X in the Higher Education Amendments of 1972, but as you all know, there was no funding provided in the Nixon budget to make that Title operational.

In addition to concern for perceived inequities from the higher education legislation, two-year colleges have felt victimized in many states because of the vocational/technical education programs offered in their institutions. They feel federal vocational education legislation has not been written to protect them from arbitrary and capricious decisions by state directors of vocational education in funding priorities. The battle for a larger slice of vocational/technical funds as well as a voice in federal policies related to vocational/technical education has raged for over a decade. This year the American Vocational Association has drafted a proposed new bill for consideration by Mr. Perkins' committee while the American Association of Community Junior Colleges has also developed its own bill which has also been introduced.

While I could identify many other federal programs which are the center of controversy, I will use only one other to illustrate the broad scope of concern by the two-year college systems. These institutions have felt that funds going to the National Science Foundation, for example, are unfairly allocated in favor of the upper division institutions. The NSF has become a target!

And some success has been achieved when we recognize that grants are now being made to two-year institutions. I might also observe, however, that some of the larger two-year institutions have submitted proposals with research components, a territory which historically has been reserved for the university, and clearly illustrates that there are two sides to the coin as far as poaching is concerned.

Pressure by the two-year institutions on Congress and on the Office of Education has led to "set-asides;" that is, a percentage or portion of the funds are restricted to grants for the two-year institutions. This is now true under Title III with the basic and advanced developing institutions programs where institutional awards are made. In the case of vocational/technical education, "set-asides" for postsecondary education have been operational now for several years.

A second issue at the federal level relates to staffing within the U.S. Office of Education. Two-year college supporters insist their institutions will continue to receive the short end of federal consideration and funds as long as there is not a two-year college advocate at a high policy level in OE. This was one of the cornerstone provisions in the proposed 1969 legislation. The two-year college people now have Dr. Marie Martin who is at a much higher level than any previous two-year college federal official in the 60's. Her office is not, from the viewpoint of the two-year colleges, sufficiently high; it has been proposed that she be at an Assistant Commissioner level.

The third bone of contention for the two-year colleges concerns

membership on advisory councils or committees. They simply do not feel they have received their proportionate share of members on the various panels organized by USOE. Considerable pressure has been generated to force greater representation whether it be through Congressional mandate or OE voluntary action.

Now let us shift from the federal agencies to an organization such as the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) which had been under attack by the two-year institutions. As each of you know, NCHEMS first focused upon development of taxonomies, a crucial step in designing any management system. Since the National Center for Educational Statistics intended to use the taxonomies for information reports such as HEGIS (Higher Education General Education Survey), the project became crucial to the two-year institutions. They observed that the taxonomies developed initially were centered upon the university and its various programs. The taxonomies did not accommodate the comprehensive programs of community colleges, particularly in the occupational areas at the certificate or non-degree level. State directors of two-year colleges also were critical since NCHEMS tended to focus upon institutional rather than state system requirements. Considerable flack was directed toward NCHEMS which subsequently created a new task force concerned with the two-year institution requirements. NCHEMS also added representatives from the state and local two-year college levels to various advisory panels.

While I could elaborate on some other historical areas of concern at the national or regional level such as problems with

accrediting associations, I will now shift to some of the issues frequently identified at the state level.

State Issues

Two-year colleges are concerned with the hierarchical attitude which exists toward the various segments of higher education with the universities at the top of the pyramid and the two-year colleges at the base. Many insist that quality teaching takes place at the two-year college level and that inappropriate prestige and weight is given to the baccalaureate institutions because of the hierarchical attitude.

As I observed at the beginning of my presentation, American higher education has historically been prone to establish a pecking order among the various segments. When the land-grant colleges were the "new kid on the block," they were known as the "cow" colleges. State colleges were next to be stigmatized and to be placed at the bottom rung of the status ladder. Two-year colleges were next with community colleges lamenting the practice throughout the 1960's. Now that these institutions "have made it," we could easily find evidence that the proprietary sector has most recently become the focal point for stereotyping and derisive criticism.

Some of you as the Chief Higher Education Executive Officer are perceived by your community college presidents as more the champion of the university or state college segment than the two-year college segment. In some cases this may be because of the organizational structure in your state where the two-year

colleges still remain as a component of the Department of Education or Public Instruction. In other cases, however, it is related to the relatively minor attention given to the two-year colleges in state master plans for postsecondary education. These institutions would argue that the role and scope assignment is not clear nor does it afford equity when it comes to the specific mission of the two-year institution.

Two-year colleges expect strong support in combating the internecine warfare which frequently develops between vocational/technical education interests and the two-year colleges. This is often provoked by a lack of communications at the state level between the various offices with the result that vocation-technical funds are often channelled towards secondary programs in greater proportion than the ratio of secondary to postsecondary occupational education. I might again observe that the organizational structure of a given state can contribute to this problem and some of you are painfully familiar with the problem I have identified.

Before moving to some of the forces or issues at the institutional level, I should like to describe another phenomenon which damages constructive relationships in some states. Two-year college people are as concerned with the drift toward state control as baccalaureate institutions. Coordinating boards sometimes communicate an impression of such a drift through the amount of paper work often required at the institutional level to respond to requests for information. Often the reason for or purpose of such information is not provided and thus there tends to be a negative reaction. On the other hand, there can be a serious problem if

each level does not understand its specific purpose and the appropriate tasks which should be carried out at the various levels. Perhaps I can illustrate my point by describing an experience I had last year in a Middle Atlantic state where I was serving as a consultant during the development of a state master plan. The structure of two-year institutions in that state provides for a local board of trustees for each institution, a state level board for community colleges, and a state coordinating board. I happened to be in attendance at a regular meeting of the state community college board when an institution's request for approval of a new program of studies was under consideration. I thought it was interesting that the president, academic dean, and department chairman of the applicant institution were in attendance. I soon realized why, however, when I heard the type of questions addressed to these officials by the state board. The board wanted to know whether the institution had the right sequence of courses, was giving the right number of credits, the kind of qualifications to be used in searching for a new faculty member and the relationship of the proposed program to others within the institution. Of course there were other questions asked but each of these had to be answered by the institutional representative.

By chance I was back in that state about six weeks later when the coordinating board met and its agenda included consideration of the proposed new community college program which by now had been approved by its state board. I was most surprised to find the same three officials from the community college as well as a representative from the community college state board staff respond

as the coordinating board conducted its questioning. I was more schocked, however, when I heard the kind of questions asked. The college was asked whether it could secure the specialized faculty expertise needed for the proposed program. Some questions of manpower needs and placement potential of graduates was discussed. The cost of the program came out in further examination.

Here was a sterling example of the wrong questions at the various levels. The local board of trustees should have been asking questions about credits, courses, staffing, placement potentials, and other internal information. The state community college board should have been asking questions related to that segment to be sure the program would not duplicate others and that the institution had clearly examined its relationship with surrounding programs and services. Attendance of the department chairman should have been as observer rather than as a presentor. In the same sense, the college staff should have been observers at the state coordinating board meeting, since only questions related to the impact of the community college program on other segments, relationships to the state plan, and fiscal implications for all of higher education should have been the purview of the coordinating board.

Institutional Issues

And now I shall briefly outline a few issues at the institutional level which represent forces which are damaging to constructive relationships. The list could be much longer and as I observed earlier, it is a two-edged sword for fault could be found with

the conduct of two-year colleges as well as the conduct of other institutions.

An important issue is that of articulation where graduates of two-year colleges are not given appropriate recognition or credit upon transfer. Some states are still seeking to develop articulation agreements and this area may well become a pawn in the chess game of politics with legislatures as resources dwindle. Florida presents an excellent illustration. The Board of Regents has adopted a policy which will be implemented unless the legislature increases its appropriations for the universities. That policy is a ten percent enrollment cut. The question becomes, then, where will the cuts occur . . . at the freshmen, junior, graduate level or at each? In Florida, the community colleges have gained such acceptance by the legislature that the Board of Regents has already acknowledged it will give priority to transfer students when implementing its enrollment cut policy. This will not be the case in many other states which I have visited where articulation is still a very hot issue.

A second emerging issue centers on the community services and continuing education function typically accepted by the community college. In many states, as a strategy for compensating for dwindling enrollments, state colleges have vigorously entered the community services/continuing education arena which they formerly had disdained as inappropriate. Two-year colleges challenge this new found dedication as being superficial and short lived.

A third issue and another one where state colleges and community colleges have clashed relates to the enrollment shift

toward occupational programs. In a number of states, two-year associate degree programs in occupational fields are now being introduced by state colleges. (These institutions even publicize remediation programs as part of the student recruitment process.) Community colleges insist that there is a basic philosophical commitment which must be made to two-year associate programs, otherwise they deteriorate into second class "bush league" domains. History has shown that baccalaureate faculty view associate degree and certificate programs as inferior and the students as low ability people. Any "bright star" who accidentally enrolls is soon counselled to move to the baccalaureate track before becoming contaminated. Two-year colleges believe many bright students aspire to mid-management and paraprofessional jobs.

I could continue with the list of issues and I am sure many of you could identify some which I have not listed here. Because of Warren's scrupulous time scheduling, however, I shall cease at this point so that Senator Clarence Blount can have ample time to discuss the legislative perspective. I would like to call your attention to the fact that the issues I have identified at the institutional level are those for which the two-year colleges look to the coordinating and governing boards to provide leadership toward resolution or at least arbitration. There is a tendency of the "new kid on the block" to seek acceptance and acknowledgement by those already there. When he has been rebuffed, however, he tends to exploit his strengths and power wherever possible. The two-year college is in a strategic position during a time of austerity and pragmatic vocational-oriented clientele interests

to leave a strong impression upon those who have paid little attention or who have been belligerent in the past. I believe many of you would agree with me that the two-year college has a strong support base in many state legislatures. It behooves the coordinating or governing board, therefore, to welcome that new kid on the block but to assimilate him as part of the neighborhood community rather than either press him into belligerent and self-perpetuating action or to isolate him in hopes that time will discourage his continued existence in an unsupportive environment.